

get shot by our Border Patrol agents. So 1,097 violent assaults against people who we send down to that violent border to protect us from criminals that are coming into the United States. Three a day occur, and we can suspect that probably three a day have occurred this year. It is important that our government prosecute those assaults, those people who commit crimes against our border agents when they sneak into the United States, many of them to commit crimes in the United States.

It has also gotten so violent on the Texas border that a local sheriff in Hildago County, Lupe Trevino, has issued automatic weapons to his sheriff's deputies, and has told them to use those weapons if they are fired upon. That is a new policy. That is how violent the border is, and they are all down there just protecting us.

One of the reasons they protect us is because of America's unfortunate but tremendous greed for illicit drugs. And because we have an appetite for narcotics in this United States, the drug dealers are willing to supply them. That is another issue. This country has to get around to solving that appetite that we have as a Nation for illicit drugs.

So we have that appetite and we send our Border Patrol agents down to the border to keep those drugs from coming into the United States, and then if one of them gets in a scrape, we prosecute them rather than the drug dealers. Maybe those times have changed because of this commutation. I certainly hope so.

And we certainly can't expect the Mexican Government to do their part. We hear constant reports of corruption in Mexico, especially with Mexican officials on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande River. That is unfortunate because they have an obligation to protect Mexican citizens as well as we on this side have an obligation to protect American citizens.

Border protectors need to know we support them. Back in the days of Vietnam, some of us remember those days when our troops came home, how they were treated. They were treated with utmost disrespect, unfortunately. And we have changed. Our country has changed. We show great respect to our troops that are in Afghanistan and Kosovo and Iraq, and we should because they are protecting us.

Our border protectors down on the border, our Border Patrol agents and our border sheriffs, need to know that America stands behind them as well because they are fighting a war just as important and just as violent as those troops in Afghanistan and Iraq are fighting. And they need to know that we will support them when they do their job, when they enforce the rule of law to keep people out of this country that are coming over here to smuggle drugs. Our Federal Government needs to get on the right side of the border war.

And that's just the way it is.

EQUAL ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

(Mr. MASSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MASSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to quiet a voice, to complete a commitment that I made to the 640,000 voters who sent me here.

Ten years ago this month, I completed a course of chemotherapy that saved my life under some of the best and most expert medical care available in the world.

I believe passionately and I believe strongly and I believe to the core of my soul that all Americans should have access to the same medical care that I had access to 10 years ago. And so today I stand to complete a promise and a commitment: I will personally, with malice towards none and negativity towards none, won't accept the Federal and congressional health care benefits policy until such time that all Americans have access to the same medical care that all of us in this exalted and honored Chamber have access to. It is not a pejorative, it is a one-person commitment to try to change the system we have today. And I will not rest until all Americans have access to quality health care.

COMMENDING THE NATIONAL CHAMPION UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GATORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my University of Florida football team for winning its second NCAA BCS championship bowl game in the last three seasons. Go Gators.

I want to congratulate the University of Florida not only for being the best academic school, but also athletic school in the country.

Their 24-14 victory over the Oklahoma Sooners showed off teamwork, sportsmanship, and one of the defense plays that I have seen. They held the team with the highest scoring offense to just 14 points. The Gators once again came back to prove that the University of Florida season was no fluke, and that the Florida Gators are again a championship team that made history. Congratulations to their great players and outstanding coach, Urban Meyer, for coaching a remarkable group of guys.

Let's do a quick fact check.

The Gators won their second national championship in the past 3 years and the third in the school's history. Florida is the fourth school in the modern era to win two outright national titles in 3 years. Florida finished the 2008 season with a 13-1 record, matching the single-season school record for wins.

□ 1700

Tim Tebow became the fifth player since 1950 to win a Heisman Trophy and two national championships.

The win makes Urban Meyer the fifth active coach with multiple national titles and the fifth coach since the AP poll began in 1936 to win two national championships in his first four seasons at a school.

Tim Tebow, Florida's leader and quarterback, not only ran for 109 yards, but threw 18-for-30 and was flawless in the fourth quarter alone when it mattered the most and the pressure was on.

Percy Harvin, whose gutsy play won him the game ball, came back from an ankle injury and dashed for 122 yards on only nine carries. And it was his 52-yard run down the stretch that set up Jonathan Phillips' 27-yard field goal early in the fourth quarter for a 17-14 lead, which the Gators never lost and never looked back.

There has been some discussion in this body about having a national championship playoff. Let me be clear, we've had a playoff. And I hate to say it, that everything is just not all equal. We want to encourage all of our kids to participate in sports and activities because we know that it builds character, but it is clear that the Gators are superb to any other schools with the conferences that we play in.

So, in closing, I want to leave you again with the Gators' chant that I just love: "One, two, three, four, five, them there Gators don't take no jive."

APPLAUDING PRESIDENT BUSH'S COMMUTATION OF BORDER AGENTS' SENTENCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on September 14, 2006, I first stood before this House to call attention to the case of two United States Border agents who were convicted in Federal court for shooting and wounding a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our borders in 2005. Now, Mr. Speaker, more than 2½ years and more than 45 speeches later, I stand before this House to thank President Bush for heeding the calls of the American people by commuting the sentences of Agents Ramos and Compean.

The agents entered Federal prison on January 17, 2007, to begin serving sentences of 11 and 12 years respectively. Both men are now due to be released from prison on March 20, 2009, after serving 26 months.

Like the millions of Americans who have followed the case over the past several years, I am so relieved to see the unjust imprisonment of these distinguished law enforcement officers finally come to an end. As these men sat in Federal prison for 2 years, my heart